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President Ben Shelly Issues Statement on the United States Debt Ceiling and the Impact on the Navajo Nation

Window Rock, AZ—Navajo Nation President Ben Shelly released the following statement regarding the issue of the debt ceiling in Washington D.C. and his directive to expend P.L. 93-638 and state funds.

“As the United States faces the looming deadline to raise the debt ceiling, I am asking our Navajo Nation people and government to spend every dollar wisely and efficiently.

If Congress does not raise the debt ceiling, it will raise interest rates and lead to immediate, dramatic cuts in government spending of about 43 percent.

This would be catastrophic for not only the Navajo Nation, but also the entire country.

Navajo tribal members would see a direct impact on social security, disability, unemployment, salaries of government employees and military personnel.

Additionally, I have issued a directive to all Navajo Nation divisions to expend 638 and state funds and I have requested an analysis of unexpended funds within the executive branch. Our top priority is to expend any external funds to avoid the risk of returning federal and state dollars to external coffers.

Based on daily updates from our Navajo Nation Washington Office (NNWO), federal lawmakers and programs have relayed concerns about our unexpended and unobligated funds. In addition, the NNWO is following legislation and appropriations bills that will determine funding levels for all federal agencies, including the Navajo Nation’s federal funding for fiscal year 2012.

The Shelly-Jim Administration is working hard to ensure federal obligations are being kept and that policy is shaped for the benefit of our people.”

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